

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY & GRAND REUNION | AGENDA

Date: 12 July 2022

Time: 11.00 - 13.00

Presentations from partners and lunch: 13.00 - 15.00

Location: CCLA, 1 Angel Lane, London. EC4R 3AB

Registration: Please bring your PHOTO ID on the day as this is required for registration.

Apologies: Any member wishing to submit an apology for this meeting please contact NALC at committees@nalc.gov.uk or call on 020 7637 1865.

The meeting will also be livestreamed via Zoom to members who aren't able to attend face to face. Online attendees will be joining as a delegate and can input via the chat facilities.

1. Apologies for absence and note changes in representation (11.00 - 11.10)

1.1. Welcome to any new members and introductions from them:

- Cllr Richard Page representing Gloucestershire Association of Local Councils.
- Cllr Ian Cowling representing Devon Association of Local Councils.

2. Minutes of previous meeting - 5 April (11.10 - 11.15)

2.1. To approve minutes of the meeting of National Assembly held on 5 April 2022. Appendix 2.1.

3. Update on filling current committee vacancy (11.15 - 11.20):

To agree recommendations from Management Board on filling the vacancies on:

Cllr Sue Lintern (Norfolk) and Cllr Mick Baker (Nottinghamshire) to Smaller Councils Committee.

Cllr Janet Wallace (Dorset) and Cllr Mike Tew (Cambridgeshire and Peterborough) to Policy Committee.

Cllr Mervyn Head to be approached to fill directly elected post on Smaller Councils Committee.

4. Discussion items (11.20 – 12.00)

4.1. Loneliness:

- What work is your county association and local councils in your area doing to tackle loneliness, particularly in rural areas?
- What challenges do you face?
- What has worked well in your experience, particularly considering the recent Covid-19 lockdowns?

4.2. Cost of living crisis:

- What impact is the cost-of-living crisis having on your county association and on local councils in your areas?
- What is your county association and local councils in your area doing to provide any support including to local people and communities?

Break (12.00 – 12.15)

5. Governance update (12.15 – 12.45)

- 5.1. A report back from the recent Task and Finish Group (governance) May and June meetings is available [here](#) on the website.
- 5.2. A summary of its recommendations to date are attached for consideration and approval.

6. Committee issues (12.45 – 13.00)

- | | |
|---|---------------|
| 6.1. To receive updates from the chairs of NALC committees on their work. Chairs to identify any issues they would like to discuss with assembly. | Appendix 6.1. |
| 6.2. To receive finance summary report from vice-chair (finance). | Appendix 6.2. |

7. Monitoring and managing performance and service delivery.

To note the quarterly report from NALC including latest membership numbers by county association area. Click here for the [quarterly report](#).

8. Networking

In the afternoon there will be an opportunity to meet with key stakeholders and to hear about the civility pledge.

14.00 Short welcome from Cllr Keith Stevens, NALC

14.00 Jamie Charters, CCLA

14.10 Baroness Scott of Needham Market

14.20 Steve Trice, Society of Local Council Clerks

14.30 Lyn Cadwallader, One Voice Wales

14.40 Katherine Brown, Blachere Illumination

14.50 Civility and Respect Project, Cllr Sue Baxter and Linda Larter.

9. Date and time of next meeting

To note that the next meetings of National Assembly will be held on 4 October at 10.00 and 6 December at 10.00 via Zoom.

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NATIONAL ASSEMBLY | APPENDIX 2.1

Draft minutes

Date: 5 April 2022

Time: 10:00 – 12:00

Venue: Zoom

Present:

Cllr Peter Allison, Cllr Mike Baker, Cllr Sue Baxter, Cllr Bob Blezzard, Cllr Brian Brooks, Cllr Lillian Burns, Cllr David Chalmers, Cllr Stephen Cosser, Cllr Peter Davey (vice-chair finance), Cllr Jonathan Davies, Cllr Mike Drew (vice-chair member services), Cllr Graham Ford, Cllr David Francis, Cllr Marion Fox Goddard, Cllr Stephen Hann, Cllr Reece Harington (Lincolnshire ALC deputy), Cllr Tony Howard, Cllr Jennifer Lawrence, Cllr Sue Lintern, Cllr Elizabeth Luder, Cllr Rob McCarthy, Cllr Richard Parry, Cllr Colin Peacock, Cllr Douglas Denham St Pinnock, Cllr Peter Quinn, Cllr Loraine Rappe, Cllr Katharine Keats-Rohan, Cllr John Scragg, Cllr Keith Stevens (chair), Cllr Ron Simpson*, Cllr Mike Tew, Cllr Mark Valladares, Cllr Ray Wickson, Cllr Rosie Weaver BEM, Cllr Duncan Wright.

Apologies received: Cllr Ansell, Cllr Beachey, Cllr Harvey, Cllr Hirons* and Cllr Plant.

*Substitute

NALC staff

Jonathan Owen chief executive, Steve Walker head of finance and administration, Justin Griggs head of policy and communications, Chris Borg policy manager (for part), Nick Howell campaigns officer, Farhana Miah executive officer, Claire FitzGerald administration manager, Beverley Brown finance and admin officer, and Jessica Lancod-Frost policy officer.

1. Chair's introductions

The chair welcomed representatives to the meeting and asked assembly members to reflect on the recent passing of Cllr Jim Wingham and Cllr Peter Richmond.

Changes in representatives:

- Cllr Katharine Keats-Rohan was welcomed into the assembly and briefly set out her experience and ambitions for the sector. She was a member of Wallingford Town Council, a retired historian, and an enthusiast to tackle climate change, encourage working together and improving standards.

- Tony Howard introduced his deputy Reece Harrington who was a young councillor in Lincolnshire.

2. Minutes 8 December 2021 and 16 September 2021

National assembly confirmed that the minutes from 8 December were accurate. Minutes from 16 September were also received as requested and were approved, subject to amendments to attendance and voting record.

Resolved: That the minutes of meetings held in December and September (as amended) be approved.

3. Committee issues

Finance and Scrutiny Committee

Cllr Ford spoke on recent meetings of Finance and Scrutiny Committee. He noted that the committee is closely monitoring budgets for the next two years. He also encouraged members to put themselves forward to fill the vacancy on the committee.

Policy Committee

Cllr Francis reported that Policy Committee had met twice since December and noted the following:

- Motions were received from a number of county associations which was encouraging, and he urged colleagues to continue to flag up issues for national consideration.
- Approval of a work programme for the year.
- The levelling up White Paper would continue to be an important item for the committee's consideration.

Larger Councils Committee

Cllr Parry provided an update in the absence of Cllr Harvey. The committee will have their first face to face meeting in May. They had agreed a work programme for the year and had a full complement of members.

Smaller Councils Committee

Cllr Ford provided an update on the work of the committee:

- A survey had been prepared and sent out to county associations asking them to gather the views of smaller councils on their expectations of the committee and NALC.
- Cllr Burns indicated that she will be analysing the results of the survey and encouraged members of the assembly to ensure their councils completed the survey. The results will be shared widely and inform the committee's work programme.
- She encouraged members to come forward to fill the two vacancies on the committee.

Management Board

Cllr Stevens provided an update on the recent meeting of Management Board. He noted the board discussed how to encourage more members to sit on committees, how to support county associations and county officers more effectively and the terms of reference of the governance review. The chief executive also added that the board discussed the article in Financial Times regarding levelling up which is now available on the NALC website.

Resolved: That the reports be received.

4. National Assembly draft work programme

The chief executive proposed the draft work programme for National Assembly including:

- Continue to work on committee issues and campaign issues which would be alternated at each meeting.
- The big themes/campaign issues would include housing and planning and encouraging joint working/ regional engagement between county associations.
- To hold a face-to-face grand reunion meeting on 12 July for members and stakeholders following a hybrid meeting focussed on business issues.
- Informal meeting/open councillor sessions will also continue and there may be merit in holding one on Ukraine.

In discussion there was strong support for including levelling up and devolution as a potential standing item.

Cllr Stevens noted that he and Cllr Baxter had recently attended a District Council Conference. The speakers had talked about parish councils and indicated that district councils need to consult with their parish councils more. He was pleased with the work NALC had done in playing a part in this.

There were some discussions had around this and National Assembly expressed the importance of district councils working collaboratively with their parish councils. The LGA commissioned consultancy report was referred to and assembly members were encouraged use that report to take forward with their district, county, and unitary councils to improve joint working.

The chief executive reflected that Levelling Up should be a semi-standing item for future National Assembly meetings.

Resolved: That the National Assembly draft work programme be agreed.

5. Finance update from vice chair (finance)

Cllr Davey gave an update on NALC's current financial position and introduced several supporting reports designed to increase awareness and transparency around NALC's financial position, which was generally good, although the need to enhance reserves to cover cash flow issues was stressed.

Cllr Valladares welcomed the improved reporting and queried whether the staffing cost estimate was realistic given inflation predictions and the knock-on effect on pay. He also asked similarly about the office costs given uncertainty over the use and future of 109. Cllr Davey stated that future budgets would need to be looked at in the light of these issues.

Cllr Ford confirmed that the Finance and Scrutiny Committee would be considering these points too.

Resolved: That the finance reports be received.

6. Update from policy and communications

6.1. Star Councils Awards

Justin Griggs, head of policy and communications provided an update on NALC's Star Councils Awards 2022. He spoke about the success of the awards last year and was hoping to continue the momentum this year. A communications pack had been circulated to county associations. He asked National Assembly members to promote this work. He also encouraged smaller councils to apply for the awards. More information can be found [here](#).

6.2. International Women's day

Justin noted the recent campaign on International Women's Day and that with support of NALC's Women Councillors' Network, a video on the contribution of women clerks and councillors had been produced which had been well received. You can view the video [here](#).

6.3. Local Council Review (LCR)

Justin provided an update on the future of LCR magazine. Due to the association's commitment to digital first and tackling the climate emergency, together with recent staffing changes, LCR content would be incorporated in the NALC website.

There were discussions around the timings of the issues and concerns were raised on lack of notice and knock-on impact on invoicing councils.

The chief executive apologised for the timing which had been exacerbated by the departure of the editor. Justin would work with county associations to ensure this would be completed as smoothly as possible.

Resolved: That the reports be noted.

7. Governance update

7.1. Task and Finish Group – terms of reference

The chief executive reported that a previous National Assembly meeting had agreed to set up a task and finish group to look at how NALC committees were working, their effectiveness and NALC's current electoral process. Management Board had proposed to set up a task and finish group of eight members possibly from the different regions and that Cllr Harvey would lead the group. A draft term of reference had been circulated for agreement.

Cllr Drew suggested that in discussion of the future of Larger and Smaller Councils Committee consideration should be given to whether they should be a committee or network.

Discussion focussed on whether the TFG should be constituted from representatives from the regions and a motion proposing this by Cllr Blezzard was agreed.

The chief executive was authorised to send out a note asking National Assembly members to appoint one representative from their regions for the group.

The chief executive added that the task and finish group would not be the only forum to discuss these issues, there would be other opportunities to discuss governance matters including in future assembly meetings.

It was moved, seconded, and agreed by National Assembly to carry the motion forward with three against and one abstention and the chief executive was authorised to write accordingly.

Resolved: That the task and finish group be set up based on the terms of reference circulated and aim to report the assembly in the summer.

7.2. Vacancies on NALC committees

Cllr Stevens noted that three nominations had been received for Management Board. Cllr Burns, Cllr Rappe and Cllr Ansell. As Cllr Burns is on Policy Committee, current rules would not enable her to sit on Management Board.

Cllr Stevens noted that Management Board recommended Cllr Rappe and Cllr Ansell be appointed to management board and that Cllr Ansell be appointed to the larger councils' committee.

He noted the following vacancies on the committees continued and encouraged members to stand:

Management Board Committee- one vacancy
Finance and Scrutiny Committee- one vacancy
Policy Committee – one vacancy
Smaller Councils Committee – two vacancies

Cllr Blezzard noted that there had been a few expressions of interest for Smaller Councils Committee and the gaps would soon be filled.

Resolved: That a note be sent out to national assembly seeking members to appoint one representative from each region.

Resolved: That the Management Board vacancies be filled by Cllr Rappe and Cllr Ansell. Cllr Ansell also be appointed to the Larger Councils committee.

8. Discussion items

8.1. Civility and respect: Government response on ethical standards

Justin Griggs, head of policy and communications reported that the Government had belatedly responded to the Committee on Standards in Public Life (COSIPL) 2018 report on local government ethical standards. The association had issued a statement expressing its disappointment at the nature of the government's response and especially its rejection of sanctions for councillors that did not behave appropriately.

He identified few relevant issues for assembly:

- NALC's statement had been quoted in the prestigious Municipal Journal.

- NALC had lobbied for tougher sanctions for councillors which had successfully influenced the COSIPL's initial report.
- The Government's slim 12-page response on 18 March 2022 dismissed nearly all the report's recommendations but committed to further work to support local government and seek views on options to strengthen sanctions involving serious incidents of bullying and harassment or disruptive behaviour.
- NALC should work with the government on the areas where they have committed to further work to support local government and explore strengthening sanctions.
- NALC should continue to work with partners and others to press for the changes needed to strengthen the standards regime.

In discussion assembly members broadly agreed with the stance NALC had taken. Cllr Francis indicated that policy committee discuss a fuller response to all the issues the government had raised.

The National Assembly held a virtual poll and endorsed, with one member against, the following statement:

"This National Assembly wholeheartedly endorses NALC's statement on the government's response to the Committee on Standards in Public Life report on local government ethical standards, and strongly urges the government to rethink its position, particularly regarding the suspension of councillors."

Resolved: That NALC's views on the government's statement be publicised.

8.2. Ukraine:

National Assembly were invited to hold an informal meeting to share intelligence on how their county associations and councils are helping Ukraine. The chief executive suggested to potentially hold an evening meeting.

Date and times of next meetings:

The next meeting of the National Assembly will be held on 12 July at 11.00 am followed by a face-to-face reception/grand reunion.

Venue to be confirmed.

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NATIONAL ASSEMBLY | APPENDIX 5.2

Recommendations from the task and finish group for consideration and approval.

The task and finish group has met twice. It's recommendations so far are:

- Support continuation of NALC approach to remote and hybrid meetings. Most to continue as remote with perhaps one face- to-face or hybrid meeting per "committee" per year.
- Publicise the work of county associations and NALC more effectively demonstrating their value and contribution.
- Identify skills and expertise and role specification for the various roles and cascade across tiers.
- • Encourage county associations to think about who they appoint to the assembly role considering diversity, rotation, and succession planning.
- Possible use of assembly deputies, direct elections to committees and co-optees (from outside the assembly) to address shortages.
- The group recommended that NALC continue to use electronic voting for assembly as well as directly elected elections moving forward.
- Single transferable vote - There were strong views in favour and against this proposal. The group felt that this would need to be taken to National Assembly and AGM to make a further decision and may be considered a constitutional change.

NALC's Larger Council Committee and Smaller Council Committee

On the definition and role of Larger Councils Committee and Smaller Councils Committee, the group drew a distinction between governance committees and the needs of interest groups represented by Smaller and Larger Councils Committees and the other National Networks that had been set up.

After a vote the group agreed to recommend to National Assembly that Smaller and Larger Councils Committees were best viewed separately from the formal governance committees of NALC, which were concerned with either management decisions or policy positions.

The value of both committees was in ensuring that the councils they represented had a voice in the deliberations of NALC. Their current wide membership made that unfocused. There were also other groups of councils with specific needs or interests whose voice also needed to be heard, for example coastal communities or market towns.

Accordingly, assembly should draw up proposals to establish networks for the smallest and largest councils for adoption at the end of the current cycle 2023.

Given the importance of these groupings of councils they should have dedicated officer support and a nominated champion on management board. (And an allocated spot-on Policy Committee?)

The group considered that if this principal was confirmed further work should be undertaken into the size of the councils covered by the networks.

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NATIONAL ASSEMBLY | APPENDIX 6.1.

Updates from NALC Committees

Full minutes of the meetings are on the NALC website at:

<https://www.nalc.gov.uk/about/governance>

Management Board

Management Board, met on 29 March and confirmed a priority for us should be to continue to make the case for the potential of the sector in the context of levelling up. They agreed that we should build on the coverage in the recent **Financial Times article** and showcase the work of councils including at the Local Government Association annual conference and political party conferences later in the year; they also recognised and supported the need for investment in this activity. The Board also noted NALC's latest financial position which is broadly good as we approach the financial year-end and emphasized the importance of investing in the development of NALC's website and integrating content from LCR magazine.

Policy Committee:

Special meeting response to the Committee on Standards in Public Life report on local government ethical standards.

This was held on 29 April when councillors developed a position on each of the 22 recommendations which will guide further engagement with the government and others such as the Local Government Association. In particular, the Committee reinforced our commitment to continuing to lobby for sanctions. To date, thirteen MPs (including some who met with county associations as part of our recent Lobby Day) have signed the **Early Day Motion** on the conduct of councillors which includes a call for stronger sanctions regarding poor behaviour. If you haven't done so already, can I urge councils to consider writing to your MP using the **template letters** produced in conjunction with our colleagues at the Society of Local Council Clerks.

Policy Committee met remotely on 21 June.

The committee adopted new policies on spatial planning and rural proofing. It was agreed to refresh our work on the Sustainable Communities Act and engage with the government on improvements to their handling of proposals. The committee discussed the We're Right Here campaign and the government's recently

commissioned Rapid Community Initiatives report. The Task and Finish Group on funding provided an update on their recent direct survey and early findings which they would be considered in more detail at their next meeting. The committee will be holding a special additional meeting to consider the neighbourhood governance review aspects of the Levelling Up white paper.

Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill

There was a special session of Policy Committee on 26 May to gauge the committee's views on the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill.

Various details were considered but the headlines were that the committee supported the government broadening and strengthening neighbourhood planning; the new Infrastructure Levy was backed – especially as it would be mandatory for all local planning authorities and the committee welcomed the fact that there were no plans to scrap the neighbourhood share principle allowing local (parish and town) councils which had already generated a neighbourhood plan to gather higher (25%) IL receipts in their areas.

Larger Councils Committee

The Larger Councils Committee held its first-ever hybrid meeting at the London offices of NALC's partners CCLA, in April.

- To help support their objective of sharing learning and good practice among larger councils, the Committee agreed to reinstate the study tour programme and organise a visit to a council in early Summer 2023 on the theme of place-shaping and sustainability.
- The committee noted recent discussions with the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman about taking forward the proposal in their Triennial Review to develop a pilot on the extension of their remit to some larger councils; the committee also agreed to provide information on their current complaints processes and types of complaints.
- They welcomed the sector finance survey which was underway until 17 May as part of our funding campaign and was urged to respond and also encourage other larger councils in their areas and networks to do likewise;
- The Committee was joined by officials from the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities who gave a short presentation on their work to simplify the local growth funding landscape so that local areas can better navigate funding opportunities and deliver economic growth. This opportunity to engage with the review was very much welcomed by the Committee who gave extensive feedback based on their own experience, all with a strong and consistent message urging the government to provide.

Smaller Councils Committee

Smaller Councils Committee met remotely on 24 May to consider responses to its letter to smaller councils asking for feedback on NALC services. Over 100 responses had been received from 31 county associations, with topics raised including hybrid council meetings, legal support for smaller councils, model documents, the Local Council Award Scheme, banking, planning and working with principal councils. The committee also held an extensive discussion on the definition of a smaller council which they agreed to refer to the governance task and finish group.

Click [here](#) to read Cllr Burns report in full.

Review of NALC governance

The task and finish group established to make recommendations to our National Assembly on our governance had its first meeting in May. The group includes a county association representative from each of NALC's eight regions. The first meeting flagged up the important issue of raising the profile of NALC and county associations with member councils so that they're aware of the brilliant work they do and how councillors can get involved; and just as importantly, why.

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**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS
SUMMARY REPORT AS
AT 31 MARCH 2022**

	1	2	3	4	5
	2020/21	2021/22	12 Months	2022/23	2023/24
	YE ACTUAL	Revised Budget	Actual YTD	BUDGET	PLAN
	£	£	£	£	£
Affiliations					
Affiliation fees	1,092,938	1,132,700	1,143,805	1,154,027	1,188,648
Trading Income					
Publication & Media	48,945		68,009		
Less cost of sales	(58,574)		(59,923)		
CONTRIBUTION	(9,629)	(7,500)	8,086	5,000	5,000
Other projects	35,488		18,258	5,000	30,000
Less cost of sales	(7,272)		(28,252)		
CONTRIBUTION	28,216	30,000	(9,995)	5,000	30,000
Events	82,986		92,804		
Less cost of sales	(33,524)		(52,217)		
CONTRIBUTION	49,462	30,000	40,586	30,000	30,000
Other Income					
Other Income	97,752	77,000	90,707	77,000	77,000
TOTAL NET INCOME	1,258,739	1,262,200	1,273,190	1,271,027	1,330,648
Other Expenditure					
Staffing Payroll	830,689	833,060	807,449	851,461	870,210
Additional staff costs	76,573	109,700	78,627	97,701	75,201
	907,262	942,760	886,076	949,162	945,411
Administration Expenses					
Accommodation/Rent & Utilities etc	133,719	145,500	195,876	155,500	163,500
Office running cost	90,464	111,250	101,154	111,500	116,500
Member Expenses	3,953	24,500	8,828	24,500	48,000
Promotions	6,765	20,000	8,906	20,000	20,000
Other expenses	8,305	10,000	13,607	10,000	10,000
Audit	5,793	6,000	5,283	6,000	6,000
	248,998	317,250	333,655	327,500	364,000
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	1,156,260	1,260,010	1,219,732	1,276,662	1,309,411
SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)	102,479	2,190	53,458	(5,635)	21,236
Movements (To)/From reserves	(85,000)		50,462		
	17,479	2,190	103,920	(5,635)	21,236

The 12 months to 31 March 2022 shows the unaudited draft management account figures. The reserve transfer movement represents drawdown of the reserves created last year for IT development and for the share of the Civility & Respect project jointly run with SLCC. The presentation at the last meeting showed a potential surplus of £88,000 but that included reserve transfers within the body of the accounts to offset project expenses. Adjusting those figures for the same presentation would have shown a surplus projected to £55,000 which is in line with the draft actual of £53,000.

There are no untoward events in Q1 to 30 June to note in respect to the 2022/23 budget.

NOTES TO BUDGET REPORT

Affiliations- Affiliation rate to increase 1% in 22/23; 23/24 3% subject to recommendations for the Publications - publications include the LCR and income from the sale of Good councillor publications
Cost of Sales - includes a recharge of £53k from staffing to Publications and Events as a notional reallocation of staff costs
Contribution- net surplus
Other project-various other activity incl Local award scheme, sustainable communities
Other income- largely from commercial sponsorship and support payment for supporting the work of other national bodies. E.g. SAAA; interest and ad-hoc income. If the Insurance commission agreement is resolved the variance to budget should be significantly reduced by year end.
Payroll- budget based on basic 2% pa .but subject to review for 23/24

Additional staff costs - This is largely for external support from contractors and other externally commissioned member services.
Accommodation/rates and utilities- includes repairs & maintenance , IT £90k (with £43k setoff against IT project Reserve) & insurances
Office costs- includes telecoms, distribution, irrecoverable vat Professional Indemnity Insurance
Member expenses -committee and representatives costs including Chair & vice chair allowances.
Savings reflect meetings remaining online.
Promotions- external promotional activity
Other expense- Legal & professional services such as outsourced payroll and HR

Movement on reserves- Transfer for project costs on specific reserves. Reserves were created at the end of 20/21 in respect to IT upgrade and migration to 365 which are being drawn down as it progresses.

This includes the result after transfers FROM reserves in respect to project costs. The reserve movement covers expenditure on two projects. Expenditure for the IT development work is included in the accommodation/ rent/utilities etc budget and covers costs involved in transferring to a cloud system with a project manager overseeing. NALC share for the joint civility and respect project is included within other projects.

Information
**Quarterly
summary report**

**National Association
of Local Councils**

www.nalc.gov.uk

Published by
National Association of Local Councils (NALC)

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INTRODUCTION

This report sets out progress delivering NALC's strategic plan including information on important internal issues, progress with our parliamentary and government affairs work, events, media coverage and publications and legal advice. The report will be largely work around the aims set out in the strategic plan and how we are working to achieve those aims. This report covers the period April – June.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE HIGHLIGHTS

I'm looking forward to meeting many of you again on 12 July as we begin to develop a mix of remote and face to face meetings.

- **Hybrid meetings** - NALC staff continue to develop a hybrid mix of working at home and coming into the office one day a week. We will review this over the summer. One meeting of all staff led to a small covid outbreak so we need to continue to be vigilant.
- **IT systems** - We have also been migrating our IT office systems to office 365 which has generally gone well and will enable us to continue this hybrid model more effectively. These developments will enable us to consider the future of our HQ building.
- **Levelling up** - The national political scene continues to be fast paced and I'm glad the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill provides an opportunity to highlight the potential of parish groups. Can I remind you to work regionally to identify a lead contact for the levelling up directors.
- **Task and Finish Group** - The group has had some interesting debates especially around voting methods, and we will report on these in due course.

POLICY AND COMMUNICATIONS

- **Engaging with government/Parliament** - NALC's chair, Cllr Keith Stevens, held an introductory meeting with Kemi Badenoch MP, minister for Levelling Up Communities. We published a [statement](#) on the government's response to the Committee on Standards in Public Life report on local government ethical standards. The All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on local democracy [held their annual meeting to elect officers, review the last year and agree their work programme for the year ahead](#). Consultation responses included on climate change, land use and landscapes. Government officials attended meetings of the Larger Councils Committee and Super Councils network to receive feedback on funding simplification and the UK Shared Prosperity Fund. On 5 July, NALC's president, Baroness Scott of Needham Market and the APPG hosted a parliamentary reception.

- **Bills and legislation** – The Queen’s Speech on 10 May set out the government’s legislative programme including a Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill. The Policy Committee held an extra meeting to consider the Bill, MP’s were briefed on key issues and concerns and we gave oral evidence to the Public Bill Committee on 23 June.
- **Campaigns/big themes** – May’s local elections included 1100 local councils in 15 county association areas and we published new video resources as part of our Make a Change campaign, a targeted Twitter advertising campaign and liaised with several media outlets on their local elections information. The Policy Committee’s task and finish group (TFG) on funding published a survey as part of their work to build an evidence base to lobby for access to dedicated government funding. New research backed our ongoing campaign for councils to have the ability to hold remote meetings.
- **Sharing good practice** – Entries to NALC’s Star Councils Awards 2022 are being assessed by our judging panels; the online ceremony will take place in October. We announced our Empowering Communities hybrid conference which will take place on 7 November in London. Climate change and neighbourhood planning were the themes of our sold-out online events.

Next quarter’s objectives:

- House of Commons Committee stage of the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill.
- Analysis of local elections, dementia and funding surveys and meeting of funding TFG.
- Publish NALC chairs open letter, Points of Light and LCR magazine.
- Online events on housing and working between the tiers.
- NALC National Networks for LGBT+ councillors, coastal communities, young councillors and women councillors.
- Party political conferences.

MEMBER SERVICES

- **Team changes** – There have been many changes in the team over the last quarter. Charlotte Eisenhart, head of member services, returned from maternity leave in April. In the legal team Gurvynda Paddan-White returned from maternity leave at the end of April and to doing three days a week (Wednesday to Friday). Gary Barker has returned to working two days per week (Monday and Tuesday). Martin Fine continues to work circa one day per week.
- **Legal queries** – We received 126 written and telephone queries in April, May and June, and the legal team provided 73 informal advices.
- **Legal updates** – In this period the team updated and reissued Model Standing Order 18 to take account of the changes to the procurement thresholds. LTN 80 (Members’ conduct and the registration and disclosure of their interests (England)) was reissued further to the government’s response to the 2019 Committee on Standards in Public Life recommendations and for the purposes

of Wales only, LTN 5W and 8. A legal bulletin was distributed with updates for county officers in April and June. We will soon be reissuing LTN 8 to take account of upcoming legislative changes.

- **Local Council Award Scheme** – 63 councils were accredited in 2021 across local and national panels. The first round of national panel accreditations for 2022 received 10 applications. Round two is currently underway with 12 applications. The Triage process for these is complete and applications are being prepared ahead of the panel assessments in July.
- **Improvement and Development Board** – Received a NALC summary report on the Implications of Levelling Up in March, following the publication of the government's white paper. The Board is to agree the commencement of the recruitment process for a new Chair and receive updates on peer challenge and support in June.
- **Working with county officers** – Fortnightly Zoom meetings have continued. Meetings are a mix of guest speakers from partner organisations and updates from NALC staff and county officers.
- **Civility and Respect** – A programme of work was approved by the joint Civility Board which included: key documentation designed to strengthen governance relating to civility, bespoke training packages with a focus on developing skills to minimise the impacts of incivility; and various tools designed to increase the profile of the project and promote good behaviours, including the Civility and Respect Pledge. Jane as a governance workstream lead for the Civility & Respect project will be co-ordinating the production of several documents, with expected publication dates for some by the end of summer.

Next quarter's objectives:

- **Website review** – Having spent some time setting down in a document the aims and objectives of the website project we are arranging online demos and conversations with a number of website providers so we can narrow down the options and to get a better understanding of what they are able to supply and how they meet our aims for a new website.
- **Civility** – The planned launch month for the pledge is July, and this will include a suite of marketing to maximise exposure and take up. Development of the training workshops and governance documents will continue over the summer with planned delivery starting in August.

FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

- **Team changes** – Silvia Nicole has recently started Maternity leave. This leaves a maternity leave vacancy which we are recruiting for. In the meanwhile the team will cover the payments aspects of her role until such time as a replacement has been found.

- **Governance and remote meetings** – NALC governance continues to successfully operate both remotely but with a return to some hybrid meetings.
- **Building management 109** – We continue to ensure that 109 is well maintained during this period and to work to ensure the building is appropriately managed or adapted to ensure covid safety as restrictions have been removed.
- **Building management 109** – We have carried out a good deal of remedial work throughout the building, especially replastering, painting and decorating some areas that suffered from damp.
- **Electrical testing** – PAT testing on all electrical equipment used by staff has recently been completed this includes laptops and other items used in the home office.
- **Events** – We continue to deliver the administration support and process payments for numerous online events
- **Upgrading NALC systems** – As part of the upgrading of NALC systems, we have now moved all NALC systems to the cloud, predominantly using Microsoft 365. Working with our new IT support provider, Cloudy IT. We have reviewed data structures and created new libraries, teams and channels using SharePoint and Teams, to help facilitate collaborative working. We have archived some files and identified areas that need further consideration. A hardware audit was completed and NALC laptops have been enrolled to mobile device and application management service, that enables central management of the devices. All redundant hardware has been data wiped and is ready for donation or recycling as appropriate.
- **Employee Assistance Programme** – This programme has been re-launched recently covering all NALC staff and staff at county associations. We continue to review this programme and whether it is effective and useful to colleagues.
- **HR support** – On-going provision of HR support with support from Work-nest to NALC staff including contracts to new staff members, and management of other personnel matters including appraisals and recruitment.
- **NALC Staff handbook** - An updated staff handbook has been recently released to all staff. We have agreed a timetable to update the handbook annually with a release date of 1 April.

Next quarters objectives:

- **HR support** – Continuation to ensure that all HR policies are up to date and compliant with HR legislation.

- **HR self service system** – We are currently looking at HR systems to manage all key staff employment data and to ensure that staff can manage their own sickness and leave bookings.
- **Health and Safety** – The team will focus on ensuring that all staff have up-to-date desk assessments in the office and also the home office
- **Building management 109** – A programme of work is being carried out to ensure that we are compliant with all regulations.
- **Policies and procedures** - Ensuring all internal documents are up-to-date and easily accessible to NALC staff. Ensure that policies such as the NALC constitution, standing orders are up to date.
- **Governance review**- To assist consideration of existing policies and review documents.
- **IT/Telephony** – The next steps of this project include, staff training on use on 365, better use of individual and shared calendars, centralised management of signatures, moving our telephony systems from 3CX to MS teams, further archiving of files in line with retention schedules, exploring all staff being issued with mobile phones and ensuring that all staff have suitable IT equipment.
- **Cyber Security/Data Protection** – We will be commencing the process for Cyber Essentials accreditation, alongside a Data Protection audit which will include a review of privacy notices, data asset register, staff training, breach register, checks for new projects/systems, data processors/sharing arrangements, data retention and ongoing compliance monitoring.
- **Support** – Our service area provides support to continue to work with other service areas to provide reliable support to our colleagues
- **Year-end audit** – We are working with Milton Avis to complete the audit of 2021-22 accounts.
- **Budget** – Work has commenced on setting the budget for the next three years.

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (KPI)

County association membership numbers are attached to this report.

If you would like to see the full set of data, they are available on request.

FURTHER INFORMATION

For more details and updates on NALC's activity, please read the chief executive's bulletin, which is circulated every Friday. If you are not subscribed to the bulletin, you can do so at www.nalc.gov.uk/newsletter.

LIST OF COUNTIES	2021/22 FINAL Fee	No. of Capped councils	No of Councils In Membership	No Councils In County	% membership-Councils 2021/22	% membership-Councils 2020/21
Avon	£ 24,788	0	126	134	94.00%	93.9%
Bedfordshire	£ 19,766	2	116	118	98.30%	98.3%
Berkshire	£ 21,378	1	86	95	90.50%	93.6%
Buckinghamshire	£ 37,630	1	176	182	96.70%	96.2%
Cambridgeshire	£ 27,908	0	204	238	85.70%	82.3%
Cheshire	£ 26,553	2	168	224	75.00%	71.4%
Cleveland	£ 10,090	1	22	32	68.80%	71.9%
Cornwall	£ 29,567	0	171	197	86.80%	85.3%
Cumbria	£ 21,761	0	228	232	98.30%	97.8%
Derbyshire	£ 26,163	0	183	204	89.70%	86.3%
Devon	£ 39,438	1	344	362	95.00%	93.6%
Dorset	£ 23,551	1	155	161	96.30%	97.5%
Durham	£ 24,145	0	102	116	87.90%	92.6%
ERNLLCA	£ 24,769	1	167	235	71.10%	68.5%
Essex	£ 49,298	1	274	275	99.60%	100.0%
Gloucestershire	£ 25,138	0	216	226	95.60%	89.4%
Hampshire	£ 39,670	1	204	244	83.60%	88.9%
Hereford	£ 6,065	0	101	133	75.90%	70.7%
Hertfordshire	£ 29,738	3	103	115	89.60%	88.7%
Isle of Wight	£ 6,432	0	26	33	78.80%	75.8%
Kent	£ 54,963	2	299	307	97.40%	97.1%
Lancashire & Merseyside	£ 38,942	1	167	227	73.60%	70.9%
Leicestershire & Rutland	£ 29,085	0	197	197	100.00%	100.0%
Lincolnshire	£ 30,625	0	325	517	62.90%	62.1%
Norfolk	£ 30,602	0	302	484	62.40%	62.4%
Northamptonshire	£ 32,688	4	216	220	98.20%	95.8%
Northumberland	£ 19,239	1	142	156	91.00%	88.5%
Nottinghamshire	£ 17,916	0	154	161	95.70%	95.7%
Oxfordshire	£ 30,103	2	239	249	96.00%	96.0%
Shropshire	£ 25,502	1	177	180	98.30%	96.1%
Somerset	£ 29,051	1	265	275	96.40%	93.2%
Staffordshire	£ 29,371	0	155	181	85.60%	82.9%
Suffolk	£ 30,152	1	347	372	93.30%	90.3%
Surrey	£ 20,100	1	82	83	98.80%	98.8%
Sussex East	£ 20,160	1	94	94	100.00%	100.0%
Sussex West	£ 29,449	0	123	138	89.10%	96.4%
Warwick	£ 22,542	2	178	187	95.20%	94.7%
Wiltshire	£ 34,901	4	216	253	85.40%	86.2%
Worcester	£ 18,309	1	151	151	100.00%	96.0%
Yorkshire North	£ 30,588	0	356	445	80.00%	78.0%
Yorkshire South	£ 20,725	0	77	84	91.70%	90.5%
Yorkshire West	£ 34,944	0	86	89	96.60%	93.3%
	£ 1,143,805	37	7520	8606		